

Medan Addis Ababa

Country: Ethiopia

Category: Development and relief

Project number: 92748

Need Feb 08 \$336,148

Update from Project Manager, Terry Early, March 2008

HIV is the foremost threat to Ethiopia's economic development and one of the most affected areas is in the slums of the capital, Addis Ababa. The local Kale Heywet Church has started this project in part of the city known as Medan – literally 'to save'. The main components are the counselling and testing clinic, the orphan and vulnerable children program and the network of volunteers who conduct home based care. Additional funding will go toward the purchase of three shipping containers to be used as extra rooms for the clinic, medical equipment and salaries for a doctor, nurse and clinic staff.

Brahani is 15. She and her grandmother live together, supporting and encouraging each other through each new day. Their only source of income is the care they receive through the Medan ACTS Orphans and Vulnerable Children program.

SIM HOPE for AIDS are advocating change in their community in Addis Ababa - change transforming enough to save lives. To this end, a significant aspect of the Medan project involves preventative outreach to the community through education and counsellor training.

In the final quarter of 2007, 64 peer educators led discussions in schools and in the community that focused on behavioural change issues, with 640 young people in attendance. It is hoped that this focus on behavioural change will have a long term positive impact on the number of young people being tested as HIV positive.

Also during this time the Medan

project trained 23 new peer educators to ensure that the 15 schools in the area will all be reached.

Focusing on peer education, HIV positive people in the HBC Program were encouraged to become advocates in the community for HIV Testing. As a result, 50 participants are now organizing their own committee to run an advocate club. They report back to the Medan project counsellors, but have responsibility for the club themselves.

As a result of such initiatives, there is now greater awareness of HIV and AIDS in the community, and the stigma regarding it is slowly lessening. One of the project participants recently held a coffee ceremony where she was able to talk about her HIV status with other women. She said that when diagnosed 3 years ago, the stigma would have made such an event unbearable.



aid that gets there

the relief and development fund of SIM Australia www.sim.org.au
PO Box 42 Penshurst NSW 2222 Tel: (02) 9580 1422

Donations \$2 and over are tax deductible

Contact: Juanita Manahan - Project Promotions Manager simaid@sim.org.au